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virtue consists in correcting the peccant matter in the stomach and intestinal canal.

All the diseases in which I have given it, had a putrid tendency. I shall be happy to hear of its success in your western hemisphere.

And am, with esteem,

S I R,

Your most humble servant,
WILLIAM WRIGHT.

N° XXXVII.

Medical History of the Cortex Ruber, or Red Bark ; communicated to JOHN MORGAN, M. D. Professor of the Theory and Practice of Physic at Philadelphia, and F. R. S. London, &c..

Read Feb.
20, 1784.

I HAVE lately received the following communications upon the Cortex Ruber, which I have found so efficacious in the cure of obstinate remittent and bilious fevers, that I think it my duty to lay them before this society, in hopes of so valuable a medicine being thereby better known, and introduced more generally into practice.

Extract of a Letter from Thomas S. Duché, dated London, August 9, 1783.

“ I was lately at a lecture delivered at Guy’s hospital, by Dr. Saunders, upon the cure of intermittent fevers, and observing the doctor spoke very much in favour of a new species of bark which he had introduced into the practice of physic, I procured a specimen of it for you,
thinking

thinking it might be agreeable to you to hear of any new improvements in the healing art. It is called *Red Bark*. According to his account it possesses so much virtue, and is of such certain efficacy, that, compared with it, the common bark is an inert mass. It contains a much larger portion of resin, has a much stronger aromatic taste than the common bark, and does not require half the quantity for a dose. Amongst other particulars, he mentioned the following proof of its superior virtue, namely, that of this medicine, when administered in a simple cold infusion, any given quantity is much stronger and effectual to remove the fever than a chemical extract from the same quantity of the other. I now send you a specimen, by which you will be able to make a trial and form some judgment of its virtues."

T. S. DUCHE.

Soon after the receipt of the foregoing letter, I received the following valuable communication from Dr. George Davidson of St. Lucia, which it affords me great pleasure to lay before this society.

St. Lucia, August 29, 1783.

To Doctor JOHN MORGAN, at Philadelphia.

SIR,

IF the subject upon which I have the honour to write you, should be found to merit attention, and prove in any respect useful and advantageous to mankind, I shall easily stand excused in addressing you, personally unacquainted as I am.

I have by this opportunity sent a small specimen of the Cinchona of this island, resembling the Peruvian bark in its botanical character, and from the trial made here surpassing it in medical virtues. It is now nearly four years since the Caribæan bark was discovered upon the heights
adjoining

adjoining Morne Fortuné, and introduced into practice by Dr. Young, physician to his Britannic majesty's troops. The freshness of the bark, the little attention bestowed in drying it, and the large doses in which it was exhibited, produced alarming fits of vomiting and purging, and deterred us, at that time, from the further prosecution of the subject, until the other day that a treatise upon the red bark, by Dr. Saunders of London, and a belief which we entertained that this was the same bark which he describes, induced us again to make a trial of it. Having properly dried it, and given it in the cold infusion with greater caution and in less doses than at the first essay, we are now happy in assuring the public, that in most instances it has not disappointed us. Still, however, notwithstanding the utmost care in drying it, in some cases it still seems to retain its emetic and purgative qualities, as the stomach and first passages, in complaints here, are loaded with a quantity of putrid bile. These are not its least valuable properties. It will, however, be necessary when these effects are produced, to check them afterwards by opiates.

With regard to its preparations: I have generally given it in the cold infusion either made with lime or cinnamon water. An extract made with spirits and water fits easily on the stomach and can be given in larger quantities.

In some late cases of tertians, where I have been called to the patient during the second fit; without watching for its going off, I have begun with this bark, which effectually cleansed the stomach and bowels, and paved the way for its future administration.

In putrid dysenteries, and in a remarkable species of dysentery, conjoined with an intermittent fever, which I have met with here, the bark has done more than all the remedies which I have seen employed. The purgative effects which it produced enabled us to throw it in earlier; the hardened scybula, the support of the disease, were removed

removed, the stomach and bowels braced up, and, by the interposition of opiates, the spasms were removed.

Having sent several specimens of the bark for a trial to different parts of the continent of America, and particularly to my worthy friend Doctor Hall of Peterburgh Virginia, I impatiently wait the result of your trials, and will esteem myself particularly obliged by your communication. If you chuse, I shall send you some of the young trees planted in tubs, with some of the seeds.

Should it be found to answer my expectation, the pleasure resulting from the thoughts of having communicated something useful, will be to me ample enough recompense. I have the honor to be,

With the utmost respect,
Your most obedient humble servant,
GEORGE DAVIDSON.

P. S. Dr. Wright of Jamaica (in fifth vol. of medical commentaries,) describes a species of *Cinchona*, with only one flower on a footstalk; the same was likewise found at the Havanna. It differs in that particular from the old bark, which resembles the St. Lucia bark, in having several flowers on each footstalk.

The following is a Description of the CINCHONA CARIBÆA SANCTÆ LUCIÆ.

The tree is commonly found in ravines, near springs, under the shade of a larger tree. It delights in places well shaded, and defended from the north-east trade wind. The soil is commonly a stiff red earth with a clayey substratum; quantities of small beautiful crystals, of a regular angular form, are found intermixed.

The tree is about the size of the cherry tree; seldom exceeding the thickness of the thigh, and twenty-five feet in height.

The

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The flowers begin to appear at the commencement of the rainy season in beautiful tufts, upon pannicles branched out in threes and fours. I have never seen that species described by Jacquin and found at the Havannah, *pedunculis unifloris*.

Before the corolla is fully expanded, and the stamina make their appearance without the tube of the corolla, the flower is white, but it afterwards turns to a beautiful purple. Then dropping off, the germen enlarges to the size of an hazle-nut, oblong and round. It gradually dries, bursts in two, and scatters the seeds, which fall to the ground and again take root.

The wood of the tree is light, spongy, and fit for no useful purpose. It has not the bitter taste of the bark. The leaves are very bitter, and the flowers, seeds, &c. seem to possess the bitterness and astringency in a more eminent degree.

An ounce of the bark in fine powder infused in a quart of cold water for twenty-four hours, and the infusion afterwards filtered, appears higher coloured than a decoction made with double the quantity of the old bark. The colour which it strikes with the *tinct. flor. martial.* and *sal martis*, is likewise of a deeper black. The spirituous tincture is of a deep red colour, and strikes a deep black by the addition of the preparations of iron.

The taste of the Cinchona Caribæa is manifestly more astringent than the taste of the old bark; an inference may therefore, *à priori*, be made, that its tonic powers are greater.

The quantity of resin which it yields is much more considerable, and an extract made with both spirits and water, seems to possess the whole virtues of the bark.